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THE ART MUSEUMS' MONTHLY DIGEST

Art Institute of Chicago
Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences
Buffalo Fine Arts Academy
Cincinnati Museum of Arts
Detroit Museum of Art
John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Toledo Museum of Art
Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts
Worcester Art Museum

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART has among the drawings by old masters lent by Mr. Morgan a sketch-book consisting of fifty leaves. In the Museum bulletin Mr. Henry W. Kent devotes a charming article to this sketch-book. The leaves suffered a considerable period of neglect, and were severely damaged by dampness, water, and other enemies, before they were saved to us by the action of a friend of the artist, who found them, counted and numbered the leaves, and straightened them out so that they should all appear right side up when the book is held in hand—the artist having drawn on the pages whichever side up they came.

A careful person evidently, and appreciative of the value of the sketches, this friend furthermore wrote a memorandum on the second page (as bound it has become the first page) which reads as follows: a gloria eterna | de

meser Benvenuto | Celini som[m]o scultore | morto en Fiorenza | l'an[n]o 1570. io Rafael[l]o | da montelupo scultore | tenne per suo ricordo.

This Raffaello da Montelupo (1505-1566), to whom we owe this precious book of Benvenuto Cellini's, was a sculptor and the son of a sculptor, Baccio or Barlotomeo, and according to Vasari was of no little distinction. He worked under Michelangelo in the Sacristy of San Lorenzo in Florence and he held the post of architect of the Castel Sant' Angelo at Rome for which, among other sculptures, he made a great marble angel which crowned the point of the dome before it was displaced by one in bronze. Cellini mentions his friend Raffaello as having assisted him in the defence of the Castel Sant' Angelo in the Constable de Bourbon's siege of Rome.

Fellow-citizens of Florence, with a friendship cemented by a stirring ad-

venture like this, and having kinship in their art, it would have been strange indeed if Raffaello should not have known Benvenuto's sketches when he saw them. His certificate should be sufficient to prove their authorship, and it would be guarantee enough for any one except the ultra-critical. It would seem as if Cellini, who was a prolific producer of the objects of his craft, would have left many sketches, yet his biographers, including the most thorough and painstaking. Eugene Plon, decline to ascribe to him definitely those which are called by his name except one, a hasty sketch of his coat of arms, now in the National Library at Florence. When, however, it is remembered that Cellini had an aversion to copying other people's work, and that the nature of his own handicraft did not require elaborate studies, only working drawings or memoranda, perhaps it is not surprising that more from his pencil does not exist.

It has been thought that the sketches under consideration show evidence of two hands, that someone else used the book besides Cellini. because while some of the sketches are drawn with a coarse pen with short, incisive line, firm and strong in handling, others done with a fine line show a hesitating, almost timid force behind them. But as these two kinds of lines are sometimes used in the same drawing, and sometimes in drawings for the same object placed side by side, and again when we remember that our ner-

vous, highly strung artist and swash-buckler, bold as he was upon occasion, must have had his weak moments, we are inclined to find this a matter of different pens instead of different artists.

"When all is said," concludes Mr. Kent, "it seems wise to come back to our Raffaello, the gentle and diffident, and to accept as guarantee enough his statement that this was Cellini's book, letting him corroborate the drawings for us as he confirms his friend's narrative for the historian."

Among gifts the Museum has received from Mr. Julius Bøehler a portrait of a girl in marble, by Francesco Laurana, Italian, fifteenth century. Mr. Hugo Reisinger has given a "Portrait of a Lady," by H. von Habermann. Carlos Baca-Flor's portrait of the President of the Museum has been given by Mr. Morgan. Mrs. John Crosby Brown has presented a bronze mass bell and stand, Italian make, of the nineteenth century, in the style of the Renaissance. From Mr. H. A. Hammond Smith comes a Dutch silver wine ladle, dated 1792. Mr. Edward D. Adams has presented a "Virgin with Angels," a bronze plaque by G. Carati. A reduced replica of Victor D. Brenner's bronze tablet of Washington Irving comes to the Museum from the Saint Nicholas Society. Mrs. James Byrne has presented a piece of early nineteenth century drawn work from the Philippine Islands; and Mr. E. B. Power two old English samplers. The many purchases include Correggio's "Four Saints."

THE MUSEUM OF THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES has acquired an "Adora-

tion of The Magi," by Sebastiano Fiorigerio. This, as Professor William H. Goodyear, Curator of Fine Arts, writes,

is a large painting belonging to the best period of the Venetian School. It was purchased in Florence by Mr. A. Augustus Healy, President of the Board of Trustees of the Institute, from a private owner in whose family it had been an heirloom.

The painter, probably named Florigero, (1500?-1543?), was one of those minor artists whose names are unknown to fame and almost unknown even to record, aside from one or two brief mentions in the work of specialists. In spite of this we are able to mention the picture as an excellent piece of school-work of the best Venetian period; probably not later than 1530.

The picture is generally free from retouches, has a fine and typical Venetian quality in colour and a masterly arrangement in composition. It has, above all, the unpretentious and ingenuous character which belongs to the best Italian art and which is a reliable guide for its dating, wholly aside from the known period of the probable author. This painting is certainly not the work of a great or famous artist and is

interesting on this account as representing the generally high standard of an entire period, rather than the art of a man of exceptional genius. It is, in this direction, an excellent pendant to the six Italian frescoes of the same period, from house exteriors in the neighborhood of Brescia which were obtained a year ago.

Mr. William A. Putnam, a Member of the Committee on Art Museum of the Board of Trustees of the Brooklyn Institute, presented near the end of the year 1912 a painting entitled "Every Saturday," by Arthur B. Davies. This is one of the most notable accessions to the paintings by American artists that has come to the Museum. It is simple and ingenuous in feeling, broad in execution, perfectly harmonised in colour, worthy of being an old master, but without being in the slightest degree reminiscent of any other artist.

Mr. Davies has risen to be one of our foremost American painters and the Institute is fortunate in having, through the generosity of Mr. Putnam, an excellent example of his latest work.

THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART has received from Mr. Charles L. Freer three carefully selected examples of Pewabic Pottery, together with a beautiful ebony table and case especially made to receive them, and the whole makes one of the most beautiful accessions of the year. The exhibit has been placed in the lower corridor where a side light may play upon the glazes and bring out their values to the best advantage. When one steps into the room and the whole object comes within his vision, a sudden impression of

a large jewel case with three colorful precious gems comes over him. In the center is a large vase in blue and gold that dazzles one with its brilliance and lustre, and the blue cropping out from underneath here and there is a most wonderful blue, with depth and luminosity. It is a fusion of blue and gold that baffles description. To the right of it is a bowl with a neutral basic glaze from the depths of which seems to sparkle a myriad of elusive gems, which play over its surface. Light is the sesame that opens the door of the

hidden treasure. No less attractive is the bowl on the left, of a vastly different blue, not a highly polished surface, but a dull glaze with depth and quality of colour hardly to be excelled. About the top is an overglaze that suggests the melting and pouring of the most precious pearls over the blue, which have retained all their opalescence in the decorative use to which they have been put.

There is always excellence of texture which is as much the aim of the makers as the production of beautiful colour.

One is impressed with the variety of colour and texture and shapes. No doubt the donor had in mind in this gift the showing of the mastery of the

potter's art by the makers of Pewabic Pottery. And it is a comforting thought—so says the writer in the Museum bulletin—that these beautiful things are made in Detroit. “A visit to the Pewabic Pottery, a unique home dedicated to the production of this ware, is full of revelations to those who love beautiful things. The building in the early English style, with the chimney made a thing of beauty by a combination of Pewabic tiles, seems a most appropriate home for the endless variety of decorative pottery which it houses. Those who have visited other potteries will be impressed by the lack of a commercial atmosphere here.”

THE MINNEAPOLIS SOCIETY OF FINE ARTS was incorporated in 1883. In the spring of 1886 the Art School was opened. Starting modestly with classes for drawing and painting, new departments have been added, and the school now meets all the requirements of a thoroughly modern art school.

The importance of the work undertaken by the Society of Fine Arts, which for many years appealed only to comparatively few, has become quite generally recognised. When Mr. Clinton Morrison, a public spirited citizen of Minneapolis, offered a plot of ground in a beautiful part of the city for building an art museum and art school, more than two-thirds of the half mil-

lion dollars required for the building were pledged within a few hours after the offer was made.

The Museum building is now in course of construction, and it is expected that the art school will occupy its quarters in it before the expiration of the school year.

In the meantime it is located in the Public Library building in close proximity to the residence of Mr. T. B. Walker, containing his collection of paintings by old and modern masters and rare specimens of bronzes, pottery, glass and other objects of art. This is one of the most important private art collections in the country, and, through the generosity of its owner, is always accessible to the public, free of charge.